



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning.

Representatives from AOT's Travel Industry Marketing and Media Relations divisions just wrapped up another successful ITB, the world's largest travel trade show held each year in Berlin, Germany. Arizona had a strong presence at this important show, as AOT was joined by several tourism organizations throughout the state in spreading the Arizona message to the German travel trade and media. German travelers continue to have a keen interest in Arizona's wide open spaces, Native American and Old West heritage and endless days of sunshine. And it is extremely important that German consumers continue to read about Arizona in their newspapers and magazines and German tour operators feature Arizona product that these consumers can purchase. Trade shows like ITB are where many of these relationships are made and reinforced. In addition to serving as a trade show, ITB is also open to consumers during the last two days, so AOT uses this opportunity to distribute German-language collateral to potential travelers.

AOT maximized its presence in Europe to partner with the Maricopa Partnership for Arts & Culture (MPAC) and the Arizona Department of Commerce to host receptions in Paris, Berlin and London in celebration of the release of the new "PHX: 21st Century City" book. MPAC worked with renowned British publisher Edward Booth-Clibborn on this cutting edge book, which is the fourth in his series on new emerging cities for art, design and architecture. His previous books featured Berlin, Moscow and Brooklyn. MPAC's involvement with the book is driven by its mission to celebrate and recognize the region's diverse cultural tapestry, to promote and support arts and culture experiences that inspire all citizens, and to energize and advance the new economy of the region. This mission is in line with AOT's goal of changing perceptions about Arizona, and these synergies made for an ideal partnership in promoting this new book. AOT invited key travel trade and media in each market to the receptions, and these guests mingled with influencers in the arts and culture arena, as well as business leaders, in learning more about Arizona as a destination filled with vibrant variety and endless opportunity.

Have a great week.



Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

Arizona Tourism University Presents Geotourism Workshop Series

Please mark your calendars for AOT's newest workshop series featuring "Geotourism." The workshops will focus on Geotourism and how Arizona and its new Arizona Origins initiative will apply and market these important principals. Learn how Arizona and its southern neighbor Sonora are bringing increased attention to the state's unique Geotourism assets through the new Arizona Sonora Desert Geotourism MapGuide which is a cooperative effort with *National Geographic*. The workshops will focus on how you can use these concepts and principles and integrate them into your marketing and product development programs. To register for a workshop please contact Sarah Martins at smartins@azot.gov or by phone at 602-364-3687.

March 28, 2007
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Pueblo Grande Museum
4619 East Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85034

April 3, 2007
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Tohono Chul Park
7366 North Paseo Del Norte
Tucson, AZ 85704

April 4, 2007*
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Bisbee, AZ

*Exact location to be determined.

Trippin' with AOT

New Arizona Roadshow Reaches Out to Mexican Travel Market

The Arizona Office of Tourism will target Mexican tour operators and travel agents at the first Arizona Roadshow. AOT plans to make the Roadshow an annual event. This year, the Arizona Roadshow will be held in Mexico City and Guadalajara from May 28 – June 1, 2007. The

Roadshow will highlight a prominent guest speaker, destination seminars and tour operator sales calls. Registration cost is \$1,995 per delegate and includes two nights accommodation in Mexico City and two nights accommodation in Guadalajara. For more information please contact Kristy Swanson at 602-364-3696 or via e-mail at kswanson@azot.gov.

Industry News

Save the Date: TravelCom Res-Expo 2007 in Las Vegas April 4-6

The newly combined TravelCom Res-Expo 2007 will take a rich and focused look at the central engine under the hood of emerging travel marketing trends such as rich media, social networking and user-generated content. The must-see travel technology event of 2007 will assemble the engaging leaders and compelling visionaries to explore, debate and entertain around what it takes to break away from the pack in today's competitive customer-driven marketplace. For more information, click [here](#).

Eco-Label Could Give Tourism New Cachet

A pilot "eco-label" program for Alaska tourism operators was unveiled Tuesday in Anchorage. The Alaska Wilderness Recreation & Tourism Association is developing the program for tourism companies in Alaska willing to commit to high environmental standards. Eco-labels are being used by a wide variety of industries--from tourism to seafood to lumber manufacturing--to highlight their adherence to environmental principles. In addition to getting certified, Alaska tour operators would be able to use a catchy eco-label to advertise their environmental practices to potential customers. The label is being called "Adventure Green Alaska" and features a picture of an arctic tern. (*Anchorage Daily News.com/Money*)

Feds Exempt Kids from Passport Rules

Children fifteen years old and younger will be exempt from the new passport rules governing travel in the Western Hemisphere, the Department of Homeland Security announced. The decision means that children and young teens from the United States and Canada do not have to show a passport while entering from land and sea Central and South America, the Caribbean, and Bermuda. As early as next January 1, American citizens traveling within the Western Hemisphere will be required to present a valid passport or other WHTI compliant documents. The exemption, part of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, applies also to 16- to 18-year-olds traveling in certain adult-supervised groups, such as school and religious groups, social or cultural organizations and sports teams. However, 16- to 18-year-olds traveling alone, with family or with non-exempt groups will still need a passport to enter the U.S. Children of all ages will still need a passport for air travel. For more information, go to www.tiac.travel.

Time Change Poses a "Mini-Y2K" Challenge

A law passed by Congress to extend daylight saving time by a month takes effect Sunday, three weeks earlier, and ends a week later, on the first Sunday in November. Many companies are scrambling to reset BlackBerry e-mail devices, desktop PCs and big data center computers used to automate payrolls, purchasing and manufacturing. This puts the U.S. out of sync with the rest of the world for longer than usual this spring, almost certainly disrupting not only computers but also the business and travel schedules of companies, workers and travelers. National hotel chains, one technology consultant said, have often automated their wake-up call services in one or two data centers. Having wake-up calls made an hour late for a couple of weeks, he noted, would certainly tarnish a hotel's reputation for customer service. Most of Europe goes on daylight saving

time March 25, two weeks after America, while most of Asia, Africa and South America do not observe daylight saving time at all. (*Page C1, New York Times*)

Commerce Chief Predicts Jump in International Visitors

International tourism is expected to continue rebounding this year from its post-9/11 lows, with both the U.S. Commerce Department and the Orlando/Orange County Convention & Visitors Bureau forecasting a 4 percent increase in foreign visitors compared with 2006 totals. Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez, who traveled to Universal Orlando on Friday to announce his agency's forecast, said international travel should break a record set in 2000—the year before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks sent travel into a two-year tailspin. Gutierrez said his department estimated that 51.1 million foreign visitors came to the U.S. last year, an increase of 1.9 million from 2005. But he said stronger domestic-security measures since 9/11 might be holding down foreign visitation at a time when other currencies, including the euro, are making travel to the U.S. increasingly affordable. "We will look at our visa process," Gutierrez said. He said travel policies need to be adjusted on a nation-by-nation basis. (*Orlando Sentinel.com/Business, 3/3*)

Family Education Trips

An increasing number of parents want to spend their often-scarce leisure time with their children, doing something enriching and educational. A Travel Industry Association survey of consumers in 2006 shows that 56 percent were interested in taking an educational trip; nearly 22 percent said they were more interested in such trips now than they were five years ago. "Parents want to make the time count," said Amy Kotkin, director of Smithsonian Journeys, a nonprofit educational travel program of the Smithsonian Institution that is popular with families. Last year, every trip offered by Smithsonian Journeys, from a Galapagos Islands journey to a Tanzanian family safari, was sold out—a first in the program's 38-year history. (*Sect. 5, Page 5, New York Times*)

Tourists Go Extra Mile To Do Good

More tourists—including college students on spring break, jet-setting luxury travelers and retiring baby boomers—are using vacations to volunteer. In the latest example of the growth of "volunteerism," United Way, one of the nation's oldest and largest community service organizations, and CheapTickets.com will unveil a Web site today to link travelers with volunteer work. Recent surveys by online travel company Orbitz, competitor Travelocity and the Travel Industry Association all show increasing interest in volunteer vacations. An even stronger indicator of the interest, TIA's Cathy Keefe said, is that more travel agencies and tour companies are offering specific volunteer opportunities. In some cases, people can add a day to their trip to focus on a specific cause. At the Cheaptickets Web site, volunteer.cheaptickets.com, after travelers decide on their destinations, they can pick the specific location for their volunteer work and then select the particular social issue, such as homelessness, domestic violence and drug abuse. (*Los Angeles Times.com/Business*)